

Exhibit A - composite

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07/01/2025

The Honorable Rodolfo A. Ruiz, II
United States District Judge
Wilkie D. Ferguson Jr. U.S. Courthouse
400 N. Miami Avenue
Room 11-2
Miami, Florida 33128

Re: USA v. Gutierrez, et al – Case No. 24-CR-20188-RAR-4

Dear Judge Ruiz,

My name is Miguel Duran, and I am a police officer in New York City. I am writing this letter as a character reference for my brother-in-law, Andrew Shawn Fermin, whom I have known personally for over a decade through both family and community ties here in New York.

Andrew and I have always had a close and respectful relationship. He has been a consistent and caring presence in our family, especially in the life of my sister, my beautiful nephew, who needs him now more than ever. I've witnessed firsthand the love and dedication he has for his child, and the important role he plays in his daily life. He is a devoted father, and his absence will deeply affect his emotional well-being.

Andrew has expressed to me how sincerely sorry he is for his actions. He understands that what he did was wrong, and he fully accepts the consequences of his behavior. He carries a deep sense of regret, not only for the legal trouble he is facing, but also for the impact it has had on his family and the people who care about him.

We've had many conversations where he has shared his plans for turning his life around. He is committed to making better choices and being a better father, brother-in-law, and member of society. He wants to rebuild his life with integrity, grounded in responsibility and family

values. I believe that with the right support, Andrew can and will be a positive force in his community and a reliable father to his son.

As a law enforcement officer, I do not take lightly the importance of accountability and justice. But I also believe in redemption, rehabilitation, and second chances, especially when a person shows genuine remorse and a sincere desire to change, as Andrew has.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I respectfully ask that you take these factors into consideration during your sentencing of Andrew Shawn Fermin.

Sincerely,

Miguel R Duran

Dear Judge Ruiz, II

I am writing to provide a character reference for Andrew Fermin, whom I have the pleasure of knowing for over 30 years. Throughout this time, I have consistently been impressed by his integrity, character, and the positive impact he has had on those around him.

From the very beginning, Andrew has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to ethical principles. He approaches every situation with honesty and transparency, which has earned him the trust and respect of colleagues, peers, and friends alike. His strong moral compass guides his decisions, making him a reliable figure in both personal and professional settings.

Moreover, Andrew's character shines in the way he interacts with others. He possesses a unique ability to uplift those around him, often putting their needs before his own. Whether through mentorship, active listening, or simply offering a word of encouragement, he creates an environment where people feel valued and supported.

Even as today, when I visit Andrew and his family for BBQ's his warm hospitality always makes me feel welcome. No matter the issue, I can always count on Andrew to be the first one there for me.

It is a testament in of itself to experience the love and warmth that I feel being around Andrew and his family.

In summary, I wholeheartedly recommend Andrew as an individual of exceptional integrity and character.

Sincerely,

Jorge Fernandez
MDFR Firefighter
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954 815 2393

Honorable Rodolfo A. Ruiz, II
United States District Judge
Wilkie Ferguson Courthouse, USDC
400 N. Miami Avenue
Room 11-2
Miami, Florida 33128

July 10th, 2025

Re: USA v. Gutierrez, et al 24-CR-20188-RAR-4

Dear Judge Ruiz,

My name is James Thomas Hawkins, and I am writing this letter on behalf of Andrew Shawn Fermin, whom I had the privilege of employing for two years. Over that time, Andrew not only proved himself as a highly capable and dependable employee but also became a trusted friend and someone I deeply admire.

Yes, I am aware of the legal trouble Andrew is currently facing, and we have had honest conversations about it. He has taken full responsibility for his actions, and I can assure you that he is remorseful and determined to make amends. I fully support him during this difficult time and will do what I can to help him get back on his feet, including helping him seek future employment opportunities.

In both personal and professional settings, Andrew has always demonstrated integrity, discipline, and compassion. He managed all of our Southern Florida warehouse operations with a remarkable level of professionalism and leadership. What stood out most was his willingness to go above and beyond — traveling to assist other markets, mentoring his colleagues, and always leading by example. He treated everyone with kindness and respect and earned the loyalty and admiration of his team.

To me, Andrew has always been a great friend, a great person, and a great employee. He is someone you can count on, and someone who has never shied away from hard work or accountability. His current situation is a sharp contrast to the character I've known him to have, and I believe this is not a reflection of who he truly is but a misstep from which he is ready to recover.

Andrew knows he made a mistake, and I believe with my whole heart that he is committed to making things right. I respectfully ask that Your Honor consider leniency in his sentencing. I do not believe that a prison sentence would benefit society or Andrew's rehabilitation. Rather, I believe that with the right support and opportunity, Andrew will prove he can once again be a positive force in his community and in the lives of those around him.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully yours,

James Thomas Hawkins

Stacey Leeann Fermin-Hernandez

88 Mill Drive

Mastic Beach, NY 11951

July 12, 2025

Dear Your Honor:

My name is Stacey Leeann Fermin-Hernandez. I am the eldest sister of Andrew Shawn Fermin. I am writing to explain my brother's importance in my life, respectfully, but most importantly, my son's life.

I have a 14-year-old son named Liam Riley Flores. My brother Andrew has been an important individual throughout my son's life. Andrew was always a positive influence who showed my son Liam love and respect. Not only is he a good uncle, friend to my son, but also a great little brother with a loving, giving heart. Growing up, my parents always told their children to treat people with respect, kindness and live life with integrity, which my siblings and I follow every day as adults.

Unfortunately, life took a turn for the worse for my brother Andrew, but he still has lived his life with what my parents instilled in my siblings and me. My brother Andrew has accepted his fate, and with good behavior, staying away from trouble, and keeping himself busy reading and learning new things, I believe he will learn from this and grow. Even in my brother's darkest days, he still manages to stay positive, and that is why he is still a person I love and respect, and an amazing uncle to my son Liam. I believe that in the near future, my brother Andrew will make a positive contribution to society, utilizing his personal experiences to inspire the youth.

Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

Stacey Leeann Fermin-Hernandez

July 14, 2025

Honorable Rodolfo A. Ruiz, II
United States District Judge
Wilkie Ferguson Courthouse, USDC
400 N. Miami Avenue
Room 11-2
Miami, Florida 33128

Re: USA v. Gutierrez, et al 24-CR-20188-RAR-4

Dear Honorable Ruiz,

I am writing this letter on behalf of my cousin, Andrew Shawn Fermin. I have known Andrew since birth and have watched him develop and grow into a responsible and dedicated family man and during those years, he has exhibited nothing but kindness, loyalty, compassion and a loving nature to his friends and family. He also attended worship service regularly and participated in many of the church programs that have helped ground him as he got older.

Andrew has always been a magnetic force that drew others in and because of this, many people gravitated towards him naturally. His radiant personality, warmth soul and kind spirit has always made anyone whom came into contact with him feel special. He opened his heart and home to anyone he felt was deserving of his space but was always willing to embrace others he rarely knew.

Andrew's dedication to his wife, son and two stepsons is extremely remarkable as he has always put their needs before his very own. He continues to demonstrate the importance of family and his commitment to them and has even relocated to another state leaving his entire family behind to improve the lives of his wife and children. This in itself has left a lasting impression on all of us.

As I close, I would like to acknowledge although I am well aware that Andrew has taken accountability for his poor judgement leading to bad decisions, I strongly believe Andrew's actions came from a naive place and lack of awareness and would like to be given a second chance at turning his life around so he can become a better father, husband and pillar in the community.

I respectfully ask the Court to consider an overview of who Andrew Shawn Fermin truly is. — not just the man involved in this case, but the compassionate, reliable, and deeply family-oriented person we know and love. I believe that a sentence allowing him to remain close to his children and community would not only benefit his rehabilitation but also preserve the well-being of those who depend on him.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully yours,

Pamela G. Dinnoo

Dear Judge Piotrowski,

My name is Jenndy Castellanos, and I am writing this letter on behalf of my cousin's husband, Andrew Fermin, whom I have had the pleasure of knowing for the past 15 years.

Andrew is one of the most genuine and giving people I know. He is the kind of person who shows up when you need help, never expecting anything in return. His kindness is not loud or showy—it's sincere, steady, and unwavering. Over the years, I've seen him extend that kindness not just to friends and family, but to people he barely knows. That says a lot about his heart.

Above all, Andrew is a devoted father to his son Logan. His love for his son is evident in everything he does. He is present, attentive, and nurturing—always striving to be a positive role model. I've witnessed the care and patience he shows in parenting, and it's clear that Logan is growing up in a home filled with love and guidance.

While I understand Andrew is currently facing a legal matter, I truly believe this situation does not reflect who he is at his core. We all make mistakes in life, but I know in my heart that Andrew is someone who learns from those moments and takes responsibility. He is not only willing to do better, he is committed to it.

I sincerely hope that Your Honor will take this letter into consideration when evaluating Andrew's character. I am confident that he remains a person of integrity and compassion, and I trust that he will use this experience as an opportunity for growth.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warm regards,

Jenndy Castellanos

Didier Emmanuel Roche

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July 12, 2025

Honorable Rodolfo A. Ruiz, II

United States District Judge
Wilkie D. Ferguson Jr. United States Courthouse
400 N. Miami Avenue, Room 11-2
Miami, Florida 33128

RE: USA v. Gutierrez, et al 24-CR-20188-RAR-4

Dear Judge Ruiz, II,

My name is Didier Emmanuel Roche, and I am writing to you with the utmost respect and sincerity on behalf of my dear friend, Andrew Shawn Fermin. I have had the privilege of knowing Andrew for 25 years, and I consider him not only a close friend, but also someone who has stood by me during some of the most pivotal moments in my life.

Andrew is one of the most loyal, trustworthy, and reliable individuals I have ever encountered. Our bond is deep, and I often refer to him as my best friend. He has consistently demonstrated what it means to be a true friend—someone who shows up, remains present, and offers unconditional support, even during life's darkest moments.

In 2020, following the passing of my mother, Andrew was a constant source of comfort and strength. During that incredibly difficult time, he was always available, ensuring that I was not alone and making a point to invite me over daily to help me cope. His kindness and attentiveness during that time left a lasting impact on me and my family.

My young son affectionately calls him "Uncle Andrew," and Andrew wholeheartedly embraces that role, despite there being no blood relation. He is a positive presence in my son's life, and the affection and trust we have in him speaks volumes about his character.

While I understand the seriousness of the situation before the Court and acknowledge that Andrew made a regrettable decision, I respectfully ask for leniency. I am confident there were circumstances that influenced his actions, but I also know he is prepared to take full responsibility for them. I believe this mistake does not define who Andrew is as a person.

Andrew is a man of good character—someone who consistently shows compassion, loyalty, and integrity in his daily life. He has a strong support system that includes friends and family who are

prepared to help him move forward and make amends. This lapse in judgment is not reflective of the man I know so well.

Your Honor, I respectfully ask that you consider Andrew's character and the positive impact he has had on the lives of others. He has much to contribute to his community, and I hope he is given the opportunity to do so without losing precious years away from his loved ones and is awarded the lowest possible sentence.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and consider my perspective.

Respectfully Yours,

Didier Emmanuel Roche

—
Honorable Rodolfo A. Ruiz, II
United States District Judge
Wilkie Ferguson Courthouse, USDC
400 N. Miami Avenue
Room 11-2
Miami, Florida 33128

07/11/2025

Your Honor,

My name is Steven Jacques, and I have known Andrew Shawn Fermin since our freshman year of high school. We met in gym class, and although I didn't care for him at first, I soon discovered that he lived right around the corner from me and was the only one who commuted in the same direction. That was in 1999, and we have come a long way since then. Our relationship has grown to be more like that of brothers. We have supported each other through many ups and downs, and our friendship has endured the test of time and life's challenges.

About two months ago, Andrew informed me that he had made a grave mistake and would have to face the consequences. When I found out, I felt a rush of emotions: shock, disappointment, fear for him, and sadness. I took a moment to reflect on what he told me and understood why he made the choice he did—to take a chance to provide for his family. While I may not agree with his decision, I understand it. When everything you've built is crumbling, and you have very few options, it is hard to say no to an opportunity to help your family. It was not the best decision, nor the right one, but it was made out of desperation. In his lowest moment as a provider, he took what was given to him. My role now is to be more present for him, his six-year-old son, and his wife, to help them move past this and find new opportunities to get to the next stage in life.

Andrew Shawn Fermin is the kind of person you just want to be around. He is the glue that holds our long-lasting friendships together. He makes everyone laugh and feel included. He is loyal and caring, always prioritizing the people he cares for. Despite having numerous friends, he has a unique ability to make you feel as if he genuinely looks forward to being with you. This brings me back to how our friendship started. Although I didn't care for him at first, we have grown to be what I consider family. I truly cheer for him and look forward to hearing about his successes.

In conclusion, Your Honor, I know Andrew has made a grave mistake that he will continue to pay for the rest of his life, including possibly missing time with his only son, who truly cherishes him. As a registered nurse working 12-hour shifts in a Cardiac Thoracic Intensive Care Unit, I struggle with the idea of not seeing my three children for more than two days in a row. I know the thought of not seeing his son is destroying him. He truly regrets his actions and is more than willing to face the consequences to move past this, but we also know that this is something that will continue to haunt him for the rest of his life. Having a felony record is not something you can just sweep under the rug. I ask that you

please show leniency and not allow a bad decision to take a good person away from his family and the opportunity to find a new path in life to provide for and lead his family.

Your Honor, I implore you to consider the profound impact your decision will have on Andrew's life and the lives of those who depend on him. Andrew is not defined by his mistake but by his character, his dedication to his family, and his unwavering commitment to making amends. I respectfully ask for your compassion and understanding in this matter, and to grant Andrew the chance to rebuild his life and continue being the loving father, husband, and friend that he is.

—

Respectfully

Steven Jacques

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July 11, 2025

Honorable Rodolfo A. Ruiz, II
United States District Judge
Wilkie Ferguson Courthouse, USDC
400 N. Miami Avenue
Room 11-2
Miami, Florida 33128

Re: USA v. Gutierrez, et al 24-CR-20188-RAR-4

Dear Judge Ruiz,

I am writing this letter on behalf of my brother-in-law, Andrew Fermin. I have known Andrew for many years, and during that time, he has consistently demonstrated himself to be a kind, generous, and devoted member of our family and community.

Andrew has a natural gift for bringing people together. He often organizes family gatherings, neighborhood barbecues, and other events where everyone feels welcome. His home has always been a space of laughter, love, and supports a reflection of his warm-hearted character.

What stands out most about Andrew is his deep commitment to his family. He is a loving father to his six-year-old son and has also embraced and supported his wife's two children as his own. He works hard to provide for them, and it's clear that everything he does is motivated by love and the desire to give them a better life. He has always prioritized being present — emotionally and physically — for his children, which has left a lasting impression on all of us.

While I understand that Andrew has accepted responsibility for the mistakes he's made, I believe his actions stemmed from a place of wanting to care for his family, not from malice or greed. He is remorseful, reflective, and determined to do better moving forward.

I respectfully ask the Court to consider the full picture of Andrew Fermin — not just the man involved in this case, but the compassionate, reliable, and deeply family-oriented person we know and love. I believe that a sentence allowing him to remain close to his children and community would not only benefit his rehabilitation but also preserve the well-being of those who depend on him.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully yours,

Carlos Castillo